

**Amendments to the Claims**

The current listing of the claims replaces all previous amendments and listings of the claims.

1. (Currently Amended) A siding board for clapboard boarding that is employed in a clapboard boarding structure in which a plurality of siding boards are fastened to a framework of a building such that lower side portions of upper siding boards are overlapped frontward of upper side portions of lower siding boards, ~~wherein the siding board is a ceramic type siding board~~, the siding board comprising:

vertical joint grooves on a designed surface thereof;

lower edges of a lower side portion formed at different heights with boundaries of the vertical joint grooves[[],];

a rear surface stepped portion formed on the lower side portion, which has been obtained by notching a rear surface of the siding board, ~~and~~;

an upper end surface of the rear surface stepped portion formed to extend in a substantially straight line in lateral directions;

an engaging groove formed at the upper end surface of the rear surface stepped portion, which has been obtained by notching the upper end surface;

engaging notches formed at the upper side portion, which have been obtained by notching the designed surface of the siding board; and

tongue portions disposed on right and left sides of the siding board, the tongue portions configured to overlap tongue portions of adjacent siding boards,

wherein the engaging groove is configured to engage with upper-board engaging portions of fastening members for fastening the siding board to the framework, and

wherein the engaging notches are configured to engage with lower-board engaging portions of the fastening member.

2.-5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) A clapboard boarding structure ~~in which~~ comprising:

a plurality of siding boards ~~are~~ installed to a framework of a building such that lower side portions of upper siding boards are overlapped frontward of upper side portions of lower siding boards, ~~wherein the siding boards are ceramic type siding boards, each of the siding boards comprising: vertical joint grooves on a designed surface[[],]; lower edges of a lower side portion formed at different heights with boundaries of the vertical joint grooves[[],]; a rear surface stepped portion formed on the lower side portion, which have~~ has been obtained by notching the rear surface of the siding boards, ~~and;~~ an upper end surface of the rear surface stepped portion formed to extend in a substantially straight line in a lateral direction; and an engaging groove formed at the upper end surface of the rear surface stepped portion, which has been obtained by notching the upper end surface upwardly, and engaging notches formed at the upper side portion, which have been obtained by notching the designed surface; and  
tongue portions disposed on right and left sides of the siding boards, the tongue portions configured to overlap tongue portions of adjacent siding boards,

wherein each of the upper side portions of lower siding boards is disposed at the rear surface stepped portion formed on each of the lower side portions of upper siding boards,

wherein the siding boards are fastened to the framework of the building by fastening members, wherein each of the fastening members comprises a base plate portion that is fixed to the framework, a supporting portion rising frontward from the base plate portion, an upper-board engaging portion upwardly bent from a front end of the supporting portion, and a lower-board engaging portion downwardly bent from the front end of the supporting portion, and wherein each of the upper-board engaging portions is engaged with the engaging groove of the upper siding boards and each of the lower-board engaging portions is engaged with the engaging notches of the lower siding board.

7. (Canceled)

8. (New) The siding board according to claim 1, wherein the tongue portions comprise an overlying tongue and an underlying tongue.

9. (New) The siding board according to claim 1, wherein the tongue portions comprise an overlying tongue configured to be disposed on a top surface of a portion of an adjacent siding board and an underlying tongue configured to be disposed on a bottom surface of a portion of another adjacent siding board.

10. (New) The siding board according to claim 1, wherein the siding board comprises a ceramic material.

11. (New) The clapboard boarding structure according to claim 6, wherein the tongue portions comprise an overlying tongue and an underlying tongue.

12. (New) The clapboard boarding structure according to claim 6, wherein the tongue portions comprise an overlying tongue configured to be disposed on a top surface of a portion of an adjacent siding board and an underlying tongue configured to be disposed on a bottom surface of a portion of another adjacent siding board.

13. (New) The clapboard boarding structure according to claim 6, wherein the siding boards comprise a ceramic material.

14. (New) A siding board for a clapboard boarding structure, comprising:  
a bottom face configured to be disposed adjacent a building;  
a top face disposed opposite the bottom face;  
an upper face disposed between the top and bottom faces and configured to be disposed adjacent a lower face of a first adjacent siding board, the upper face comprising a notched portion configured to be overlapped by the lower face of the first adjacent siding board;

a lower face disposed opposite the upper face and configured to be disposed adjacent an upper face of a second adjacent siding board, the lower face comprising a stepped portion configured to overlap a notched portion of the upper face of the second adjacent siding board;

a left face configured to be disposed adjacent a right face of a third adjacent siding board, the left face comprising a stepped portion configured to overlap a corresponding stepped portion on the right face of the third adjacent siding board; and

a right face configured to be disposed adjacent a left face of a fourth adjacent siding board, the right face comprising a stepped portion configured to overlap a corresponding stepped portion on the left face of the fourth adjacent siding board.

15. (New) The siding board according to claim 14, wherein the notched portion of the upper face of the siding board is configured to contact a first fastener to fasten the siding board to a structure, and the stepped portion of the lower face of the siding board is configured to contact a second fastener to fasten the siding board to the structure.

16. (New) The siding board according to claim 15, wherein the first fastener is configured to fasten the first adjacent siding board to the structure, and the second fastener is configured to fasten the second adjacent siding board to the structure.

17. (New) The siding board according to claim 14, wherein the stepped portions of the siding board comprise laterally extending tongue portions.

18. (New) The siding board according to claim 17, wherein the tongue portions comprise an overlying tongue and an underlying tongue.

19. (New) The siding board according to claim 17, wherein the tongue portions comprise a first tongue configured to be disposed on one of a top and a bottom surface of the stepped portion of the third adjacent siding board and a second tongue configured to be disposed on a bottom and a top surface of the stepped portion of the fourth adjacent siding board.

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20. (New) The siding board according to claim 14, wherein the siding board comprises a ceramic material.